AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph bridging pages 1-2 of the specification with the following amended paragraph:

In case of degradation or failure of one working channel, the packet data traffic needs to be switched on the spare channel in order to avoid the loss of the whole traffic distributed on the interested Virtual Container, resulting in that the whole traffic becomes unavailable (the bytes of one frame are distributed among all the virtual containers).

Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 16 of page 7 with the following amended paragraph:

The incoming packet data frames (for instance a sequence of frames labelled as A, B, C, D, E, etc.[[.]]) are stored into a queue buffer 40l providing them to a dispatcher 42l. The dispatcher 42l provides its output to four (one for each channel) path source functional blocks 421l, 422l, 423l, 424l that manage the insertion of a packet data frame into a Virtual Container. Analogously, at the receiving side (NE#1), there are four (one for each channel) path sink functional blocks 441r, 442r, 443r, 444r that manage the extraction of a packet data frame from a Virtual Container, a block 50 for reordering the received frames and a queue buffer 52. The "l" suffix of blocks of Network Element #0 stands for "left"; the "r" suffix of blocks of Network Element #1 stands for "right".